

ated is, "Oh! I must rest up a while before I begin to take cases,  
*I am all worn out.*"

Just at present the question of going back to the two years system of training is being agitated. If the hospitals had kept their word when the three year system was inaugurated; if they had increased the number of nurses, and had a large number of ward maids and orderlies; if they had created an eight hour system, and made the nurse's third year an educational advantage to her, I should say unhesitatingly that it would be a backward step to return to the two years course. As it is now, with the long hours of routine work, and little more than ordinary educational advantage in the third year, I can not see that, with the exception of a few progressive institutions which have really striven to better the conditions of the nurses, it is of any especial advantage to any but the hospital, which is thereby relieved from the necessity of paying salaries to graduates to hold its positions of operating-nurses, head-nurses, and night superintendents, those positions being filled by the senior pupil nurses.

I do not wish it to be understood from this discussion of the matter, that I think all superintendents and chief nurses, are narrow, selfish and prejudiced—far from it. Some of the finest, most broad-minded women I have ever met were hospital superintendents and chief nurses, women whose end and aim in life was the betterment of the conditions in their own training-schools, and the uplifting of the profession in general; but I do say, that there are an unfortunately large number who continue to regard the training-school as a reformatory, and the inmates as in need of discipline, and this view is *not* conducive to the betterment of the profession as a whole, nor will it tend to attract to that profession those women who, from a moral, social, and educational standpoint, are most desirable, if nursing, as a profession, is to attain to that standard of worth and excellence which its illustrious founders intended, and which many noble and disinterested women are still laboring and hoping to achieve.

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#### THE QUESTION OF RANK

DEAR EDITOR: In several numbers of THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING letters have been written in regard to giving the nurses title or standing in the army; and some time ago some one used the term "intolerable conditions now existing in the army." Being a Spanish American war nurse, and also having served in the Philippine Islands, I would like to say a few words on the subject. What kind of standing

do we want in the army? What title do we want? Many think the officers, officers' wives and daughters do not pay us sufficient attention. We are not invited to their homes or social gatherings, but what difference does it make whether we are one of the four hundred or not? The officers and families constitute what, in civil life, would be the four hundred, and I doubt if many of the nurses in civil life are invited to the receptions given by Mrs. Potter-Palmer, Mrs. Marshall Field or others of the wealthy class. We do our work and do not feel slighted because of the lack of our invitations. It matters but little if our name is not on the calling list of society people, and why should our feelings be hurt if the same distinction is made in army life? Is not Chief Nurse a good enough title for the woman in charge of the nursing force? It seems to me this title is all sufficient. Would Lieutenant, Captain or General sound better? A lady is a lady everywhere. You cannot place her where she would not be a lady. Let her be in the kitchen, in the hospital or sick room, her manners, dress, and conduct proclaim this title and all good men will pay her the deference which is due to all good women. We cannot climb the social ladder by trying to force ourselves into the company of those who either do not want us or are indifferent, and every nurse should have sufficient resources of her own so that the question of class and caste would not cause her an anxious thought. Many seem to be of the opinion that only inferior women are government nurses. Those who say this do not know what they are talking about. Mrs. Kinney in the last number, gave a list of nurses who had served a number of years, for Uncle Sam. I am acquainted with most of those mentioned and finer women I do not know. There certainly are some inferior women in the military hospitals, but they are in the minority as in the civil hospitals, and as for the "intolerable conditions" spoken of as existing I found the conditions more than tolerable; they were pleasant. What kind of life the army nurse has depends very much on the commanding officer and chief nurse. In the civil hospital much depends on the superintendent. What is the difference? Each one gathers around her a circle of friends. This circle may be large or small, and the character depends on the individual. If our natures are coarse, wealth, birth, station or title will not draw to us people of refinement and culture; but if we are not coarse in nature, our friends will never have this quality. Let us do our best wherever we are, making the most of our opportunities, and our lives will not be in vain, although there is no title prefixed to our name. Methinks I hear the taps: "Bugle blow soft and low, through the hall, hear the call, good night all."

HARRIET E. SIGSBEE, R.N.